

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A computer ~~interactive system, wherein a user's question is recognized and a system's answer is outputted~~system for performing an interactive dialog with a user, comprising:

a data base that stores a dictionary containing a plurality of words and a plurality of phrases, each phrase containing a string of words and a syntactic pattern of the string of the words included in the phrase;

a recognition unit for ~~recognizing said question~~configured to recognize a user's input and understand what the user says by referring to the dictionary stored in the database;

~~a selection unit for selecting said answer;~~

an evaluation unit for ~~evaluating a~~configured to evaluate a consistency of an interactive dialog between said user and system under a prescribed criterion and determining whether or not to continue said dialog; and, the consistency of the interactive dialog being established even if a spoken language spoken by the user contains a word reflecting a fact that the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system;

a determining unit configured to determine whether or not the interactive dialog with the user is to be continued even further based on a result of the evaluated consistency of the interactive dialog with the user;

a selection unit configured to select words from the dictionary to generate a phrase which is used to answer a phrase in the user's input if it is determined that the interactive dialog is to be continued further by the determining unit; and

~~an output unit for outputting said answer or a statement for continuing or ending said dialog~~
configured to output the phrase generated by the selection unit to the user.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 1, wherein ~~a question by a user's voice is recognized and a system's answer is outputted by voice synthesize,~~
comprising:

~~a voice~~the recognition unit is a speech recognition unit that recognizes the spoken
language spoken by the user, further comprising:

~~for recognizing said question;~~

~~a selection unit for selecting said answer;~~

~~an evaluation unit for evaluating a dialog between said user and system under a~~
~~prescribed criterion and determining whether or not to continue said dialog; and~~

~~a voice synthesize-synthesizing unit for outputting said answer or a statement for~~
~~continuing or ending said dialog~~configured to synthesize the phrase generated by the selection
unit as voice sound.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The ~~computer~~interactive system according to ~~claim 4~~claim 3, wherein ~~said prescribed criterion is~~the evaluation unit evaluates a consistency of the interactive dialog with said user based on at least one of a ~~user profile~~of the user, a probability of using a word, voice characteristics, a time lapse for a response from said user, a response speed of said user and a dialog circumstance.

7. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~elaim-4~~claim 3, wherein said ~~voice-speech~~ recognition unit ~~that recognizes said question from said user with robustness~~the spoken language spoken by the user comprises:

means for robustifying the spoken language in which personal accents of words and personal tones of phrases appearing in the spoken language spoken by the user are accumulated so as to realize robust spoken language recognition.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 7, wherein said ~~voice~~the recognition unit robustifies the spoken language spoken by the user at least by excluding ~~exeludes~~ a monologue of said user.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~elaim-4~~claim 3, wherein

~~said the~~ evaluation unit ~~further determines whether or not to allow an error of said user, to compromise with said user, or to interrogate said user~~is configured to evaluate a consistency of the interactive dialog with said user based on a criterion that is predetermined by judging whether or not a user's mistake is allowed by the computer system, and

the selection unit selects a concessive answer to the user's input even if the spoken language spoken by the user contains a word reflecting the fact the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system.

12. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~elaim-4~~claim 3, wherein

the data base further stores a plurality of preselected phrases which are used to answer to the user's input, and

said selection unit further selects a speech pattern including the selected answerone of the plurality of preselected phrases.

13. (Currently amended) ~~The interactive computer system according to claim 4~~claim 3, wherein, said selection unit intentionally selects a wrong answerword.

14. (Currently amended) ~~The interactive~~A computer system according to claim 13, ~~wherein:~~that executes a word chain game which is played by a user, the word chain game being defined as a word-interchanging game between the user and the computer system in which an iterative step will be repeated until a loser is determined based on a judgment of whether the user or the computer system first breaks a rule of the word chain game, the rule saying that game players are requested to alternate outputting a word which has initial alphabet letters identical to a final plurality of alphabet letters of a previous word, but which does not finish with pre-determined alphabet letters, comprising:

a database that stores a dictionary containing a plurality of words;

said interactive system is a verses capping systems; and

a recognition unit configured to recognize a user's input;

an evaluation unit configured to determine whether or not the user's input is allowed with respect to the rule of the word chain game so as to judge whether or not the word chain game played by the user and the computer system is to be continued;

a selection unit configured to select a word if it is determined that the word chain game is to be continued by the evaluation unit, wherein a wrong word that leads to termination of the

word chain game due to the computer system breaking the rule is allowed as a selected word;
and

~~said voice synthesize an output unit outputs a statement manifesting a defeat of said voice~~
interactive system is configured to output the selected word selected by the selection unit to the
user as an answer.

15. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to ~~claim 4~~claim 14,
~~which further comprises wherein,~~

~~a vocabulary~~the data base for storing further stores a plurality of a series of vocabularies
~~in an order of use frequency~~words which are chained in accordance with the rule of the word
chain game, and

~~wherein said selection unit selects for said answer one of said vocabularies of the highest~~
~~use frequency~~the word for answering the user from those included in the plurality of the series of
the words stored in the data base in order not to terminate the word chain game due to a
difficulty for searching for a next word.

16. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to ~~claim 4~~claim 14,
~~which further comprises comprising:~~

~~a response estimation anticipating unit for foreseeing~~configured to anticipate a response
from said user if the word selected by the selected unit is received and responded to by the user;

~~wherein said selection unit selects for said answer on the basis of the foreseen result.~~

17. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to ~~claim 4~~claim 14,
~~which further comprises comprising:~~

a timer ~~for counting a prescribed~~ configured to count an elapsed time lapse after ~~completing said~~ the output unit outputs the selected word selected by the selection unit to the user as the answer, and wherein:

said selection unit further selects a ~~hint~~ further word which is used for hinting a next word after said ~~prescribed elapsed time lapse~~ becomes longer than a predetermined time; and

~~said voice synthesize unit outputs said hint~~ the output unit further outputs the further word so as to hint at the user's answer to a previous word outputted by the computer system.

18. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 14, further ~~comprises comprising:~~

a ~~difficulty degree set-up unit for fixing an intellectual level of said dialog~~ configured to set up a degree of difficulty defining a condition on which the word selected by the selecting unit for answering the user is limited in order to decrease an opportunity for the user to become a winner in the word chain game,

wherein:

said selection unit selects ~~said answer~~ the word on the basis of ~~said difficulty~~ the degree of difficulty.

19. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, wherein:

the data base further stores a plurality of phrases, each phrase having an index indicative of a degree of difficulty,

said evaluation unit further evaluates a ~~circumstance of said dialog~~ degree of a user's satisfaction with a currently proceeding dialog between the user and the computer system by

measuring a difference between the degrees of difficulty of the words which are used by the user and the computer system referring to the data base;

~~said selection unit selects and combines on the basis of the determination result said answer together with one of a plurality of dialog sentences for preventing said user from being displeased; and said voice synthesize unit outputs the combined sentence~~further limits the selected words and the generated phrase for answering the user's input to those which have a degree of difficulty within a range of degrees of difficulty based on the evaluated degree of the user's satisfaction.

20. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 19, said selection unit randomly selects ~~one of said dialog sentences~~the word for answering the user's input from a plurality of words which have an identical degree of difficulty.

21. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 19, ~~which further comprises~~comprising:

~~a timer for counting a response time from said user~~configured to count an elapsed time after the output unit outputs the selected word selected by the selection unit to the user as the answer;

~~wherein said selection unit selects one of said dialog sentences on the basis of said response time~~the evaluation unit evaluates the degree of a user's satisfaction with a currently proceeding dialog between the user and the computer system taking into account the elapsed time counted by the timer.

22. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 19, ~~wherein:~~wherein,

the computer system is configured to execute a word chain game which is played by a user, the word chain game being defined as a word-interchanging game between the user and the computer system in which an iterative step will be repeated until a loser is determined based on a judgment of whether the user of the computer system first breaks a rule of the word chain game, the rule saying that game players are alternately requested to output a word which has an initial alphabet letter identical to a plurality of final alphabet letters of a previous word, but does not finish with pre-determined alphabet letters,

~~said answer is a word; and~~

~~said word is stored together with its head and ending~~

the data base stores a plurality of words which are classified according to their initial and final alphabet letters,

the evaluation unit is configured to determine whether or not the user's input is allowed with respect to the rule of the word chain game so as to judge whether or not the word chain game played by the user and the computer system is to be continued, and

the selection unit is configured to select a word if it is determined that the word chain game is to be continued by the evaluation unit, wherein a wrong word that leads to termination of the word chain game due to a rule being broken by the computer system is allowed as the selected word.

23. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 22, wherein ~~said word and its head and ending is described by~~ the data base stores the initial and final alphabet letters of the plurality of words as tags in an extensible markup language XML(XML) format.

24. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 19~~claim 22, ~~which further comprises comprising:~~

~~a counter for counting configured to count a number of round trip dialog~~replies received to the word outputted by the computer system from the user, wherein

~~said selection unit selects a wrong answer for the system's being defeated by said user, when said number becomes word that breaks the rule of the word chain game such that the user is a winner of the word chain game, if the number becomes greater than a prescribed number.~~

25. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 24, wherein said prescribed number is randomly changed whenever the user and the computer system start to play the word chain game.

26. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 19~~claim 22, ~~which further comprises comprising:~~

~~another a timer for counting a~~configured to count an elapsed time lapse from a beginning of said an interactive dialog between the user and the computer system,

~~wherein said selection unit selects a wrong answer for the system's being defeated by said user, when said time lapse becomes word that breaks the rule of the word chain game such that the user is a winner of the word chain game, if the elapsed time becomes greater than a prescribed time-lapse.~~

27. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 26, wherein said prescribed time lapse is randomly changed whenever the user and the computer system start to play the word chain game.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Canceled)

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive~~computer system according to ~~claim 30~~claim 22, ~~which further comprises~~comprising:

~~another a timer for counting a~~configured to count an elapsed time lapse after completing
~~outputting said answer~~after the output unit outputs the selected word selected by the selection
unit to the user as the answer,

~~wherein said voice synthesize unit outputs a statement for prompting said user to respond~~
if the elapsed time counted by the timer becomes greater than a predetermined time, the selection
unit further selects a further word which is used for hinting at a next word and the output unit
further outputs the further word so as to hint at a user's answer to a previous word outputted by
the computer system.

32. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive~~computer system according to ~~claim 19~~claim 22, ~~which further comprises a genre decision unit for selecting a field of topic,~~ wherein said
~~selection unit selects said answer within the decided genre~~

the data base stores the plurality of words, each word being indexed by a field to which
the word belongs,

the selection unit selects the word from a plurality of words which belong within an
identical field.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive~~computer system according to ~~claim 19~~claim 22, wherein ~~said voice synthesize unit outputs said answer after a prescribed time interval after~~

~~recognizing said question of said user, when a word of said answer begins from a prescribed~~
~~head~~the output unit waits to output the selected word selected by the selection unit until a
predetermined time is elapsed from receiving the user's input if an initial alphabet letter of the
word coincides with a predetermined alphabet letter.

35. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 19,
wherein ~~said voice synthesize unit outputs said answer after a prescribed time interval after~~
~~recognizing said question of said user, when said answer is one of prescribed words~~the output
unit waits to output the phrase generated by the selection unit until a predetermined time is
elapsed from receiving the user's input in order to express that the computer system acts as a
thinking entity rather than a simple information processing machine.

36. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 19,
wherein when ~~the system is defeated by said user:~~

~~said selection unit selects one of words with a prescribed ending; or~~

~~if there is not a word with said prescribed ending, said selection unit selects one of~~
~~statements manifesting the system's defeat~~the selection unit exhausts the plurality of words
stored in the data base, the plurality of words having a degree of difficulty among which a word
can be selected for answering to the user's input, the output unit indicates that it concedes.

37. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 3~~claim 1,
which further comprises a learning unit for:

interrogating by using said voice ~~synthesize~~synthesizing unit, said user about said
question from said user of which an answer is not yet known to the system; and

storing an answer of said question and a scenario regarding the interrogation.

38. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 37, ~~which further comprises a updating unit for updating and accumulating the answer words and scenarios obtained by said interrogation comprising:~~

a data base that stores a plurality of words and phrases among which the selection unit selects the words to generate the phrase so as to answer the user's input and which are updated when the learning unit learns a new word and phrase in the situation where the recognition unit has difficulty recognizing the user's input.

39. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 37, ~~which further comprises a memory for storing a hysteresis of similar dialogs,~~

~~wherein said updating unit chooses one of said scenarios which is most frequently used, when said scenarios are not consistent with each other~~ wherein

the database that stores a scenario under which a plurality of words are reconstructed in order to prevent making an erroneous assumption in a context of the interactive dialog, the scenario having appeared at least two times in the interactive dialog between the user and the computer system, and a scenario under which the plurality of words are reconstructed is rewritten as a frequently-used scenario if the same plurality of words leads to a different scenario.

40. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 39, wherein ~~said updating unit~~ the selection unit chooses an earlier scenario, when said scenarios are used at the same probability.

41. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 37, wherein said selection unit selects ~~the system's response among said words and scenarios in accordance with a content of the user's response~~ words and generates a phrase from the words to

be used as an answer to the user's input such that a scenario under which the words are reconstructed is different from that under which the interactive dialog between the user and the computer system has been carried out.

42. (Currently amended) The interactive-computer system according to claim 41, ~~which further comprises a sentiment recognition unit for analyzing the user's sentiment on the basis of the recognized user's voice, wherein the recognition unit is a speech recognition unit that~~ recognizes the spoken language spoken by the user, further comprising:

a voice synthesizing unit that outputs the phrase generated by the selection unit as a voice sound,

~~wherein said selection unit changes a tone for a selected system's response in accordance with said user's sentiment~~ the speech recognition unit further recognizes a degree of a user's satisfaction with a currently proceeding dialog between the user and the computer system by sensing a tone of the spoken language spoken by the user, and

the voice synthesizing unit controls a tone of the voice sound in response to the degree of the user's satisfaction.

43. (Currently amended) The interactive-computer system according to claim 42, wherein:

~~said sentiment recognition unit analyzes whether said user's sentiment is directed to the system or a general affair~~ if the user's satisfaction is not recognized, the speech recognition unit analyzes whether said user is not satisfied with the system or with a general affair that is a subject matter of the interactive dialog; and

~~said selection unit changes~~voice synthesizing unit controls a tone for a selected system's response of the voice sound in accordance with the analysis result.

44. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 41, ~~which further comprises a provincialism recognition unit for recognizing a provincialism of said user~~wherein the recognition unit further recognizes a particular accent of said user which reflects where the user comes from;

~~wherein said selection unit changes a tone for a selected system's response.~~

45. (Canceled)

46. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to ~~claim 41~~claim 44, which further comprises a language recognition unit,

~~wherein said selection~~the synthesizing unit changes a tone for a selected system's response of the voice sound which is outputted from the computer system such that the voice sound of the computer system is identical to that of the user's input.

47. (Canceled)

48. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive computer~~ system according to claim 37, ~~which further comprises a user's attribute determination unit for determining a user's attribute on the basis of a voice quality of said use;~~

~~wherein said selection unit changes said voice quality for a selected system's response~~the recognition unit recognizes a personal profile of the user from the user's input, the personal profile of the user includes how old the user is and the user is either male or female, and

the synthesizing unit changes a tone of the voice sound which is outputted from the computer system in accordance with said attribute the personal profile of the user.

49. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 37, ~~which further comprises another user's attribute determination unit for determining a user's attribute on the basis of a user's figure, comprising:~~

a face recognition unit that captures an image of a user's face and recognizes a personal profile of the user from the user's face, the personal profile of the user including how old the user is and the user is either male or female,

~~wherein said selection changes a voice quality for a selected system's response the synthesizing unit changes a tone of the voice sound which is outputted from the computer system in accordance with said attribute~~the personal profile of the user.

50. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 48, wherein said selection unit selects the ~~system's response~~words and generates a phrase so as to answer the user's input with the phrase in accordance with ~~said attribute~~the personal profile of the user recognized by the recognition unit.

51. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 44~~claim 49, wherein said selection unit selects the ~~system's response~~words and generates a phrase so as to answer the user's input with the phrase in accordance with ~~said attribute~~the personal profile of the user recognized by the recognition unit.

52. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 37~~claim 49, ~~which further comprises an image recognition unit for executing a lip reading on the basis of an image pick-up of a lip motion,~~

~~wherein said image recognition unit together with said voice recognition unit execute a recognition of user's voice~~the face recognition unit traces a lip motion of the user while the user is speaking the user's input to the computer system, and

the recognition unit recognizes a user's input and understands what the user says using the lip motion of the user.

53. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 37~~claim 49, wherein:

~~the system is a robot which comprises a plurality of cameras for picking up an image of user's face, thereby deciding a direction of said user's face; and~~

~~said voice recognition unit starts executing a voice recognition, when said user's face is directed to said robot~~wherein the face recognition unit detects a direction of the user's face, and

the recognition unit uses the image of the user's face in order to recognize a user's input and understands what the user says only if the face recognition unit captures a whole face of the user.

54. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 53, ~~wherein:~~wherein

the face recognition unit has a plurality of cameras,

~~said plurality of cameras are disposed around a head of said robot~~so as to watch a wide scope, thereby determining whether or not said user's face is directed to said robotone of the plurality of the cameras, and;

~~said voice recognition unit starts voice recognition when said user's face become directed to said robot~~the recognition unit uses the image of the user's face in order to recognize the user's input and understands what the user says only if the face recognition unit captures the whole face of the user.

55. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 53, wherein:

the face recognition unit further has a plurality of directional microphones ~~are disposed around a head of said robot~~ so as to catch a sound from every direction, thereby determining whether or not said user's face is directed to ~~said robot~~ one of the plurality of the directional microphones, and;

~~said voice recognition unit starts voice recognition, when said user's face become directed to said robot~~ the recognition unit uses the image of the user's face in order to recognize the user's input and understands what the user says only if the face recognition unit captures the whole face of the user.

56. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to ~~claim 54~~ claim 53, wherein the face recognition unit has a camera, and said robot directs if the camera is not in front of said user's face, the camera moves in order to catch the user's face.

57. (Currently amended) The ~~interactive-computer~~ system according to claim 55, wherein ~~said robot directs~~ the face recognition unit has a camera, and if the camera is not in front of said user's face, the camera moves in order to catch the user's face.

58. (Currently amended) A computer ~~program-readable medium comprising instructions~~ being executed by a computer, the computer having a data base that stores a dictionary containing a plurality of words and a plurality of phrases so as to perform an interactive dialog with a user mimicking human-human communications ~~for operating an interactive system,~~ wherein ~~a user's question is recognized and a system's answer is outputted,~~ the instructions for implementing ~~comprising~~ the subroutines of:

~~a recognition subroutine for recognizing said question~~that recognizes a user's input and understands what the user says by tracing a string of words contained in the user's input and analyzing a syntactic pattern of the string of the words contained in the user's input;

~~a selection subroutine for selecting said answer;~~

~~an evaluation subroutine for evaluating that evaluates a consistency of an interactive dialog between with said user and system under a prescribed criterion and determining whether or not to continue said dialog; and, the consistency of the interactive dialog being established even if a spoken language spoken by the user contains a word reflecting a fact that the user misunderstands what the computer system says;~~

~~a determining subroutine that determines whether or not the interactive dialog with the user is to be continued even further based on a result of the evaluated consistency of the interactive dialog with the user;~~

~~a selection subroutine that selects words and generates a phrase so as to answer the user's input with the phrase if it is determined that the interactive dialog is to be continued further; and~~

~~an output subroutine for outputting said answer or a statement for continuing or ending said dialog that outputs the phrase generated by the selection unit to the user.~~

59. (New) A method for interactively handling a dialog with a user of a computer system, wherein the computer system has a dictionary stored in a database, the dictionary containing a plurality of words and a plurality of phrases, each phrase containing a string of words and a syntactic pattern, comprising the steps of:

recognizing a user's input and understanding what the user says by tracing a string of words contained in the user's input and analyzing a syntactic pattern of the string of the words contained in the user's input by referring to the dictionary stored in the data base;

evaluating a consistency of an interactive dialog based on a result of whether or not the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system in a currently running interactive dialog;

selecting words from the dictionary so as to generate a phrase which is used to answer to the user's input such that the generated phrase is consistent with the content of the user's input, even if the user's input includes a word or a phrase indicating a fact that the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system; and

outputting the phrase to the user so as to answer the user's input.

60. (New) The method according to claim 59, further comprising the steps of:

learning a new word and a new phrase which is not contained in the dictionary when the user's input is not recognized since either one of the words or the syntactic pattern of the string of the words contained in the user's input is not found in the dictionary by asking the user a question about the user's input and receiving a user's response until a recognition of the user's input is accomplished; and

updating the dictionary based on a user's response to the question about the user's input asked by the computer system.

61. (New) The method according to claim 60, further comprising a step of:

determining whether or not the interactive dialog with the user is to be continued even further based on a result of the evaluated consistency of the interactive dialog with the user,

wherein even if the user's input includes the word or a phrase indicating the fact the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system, there is a case where the interactive dialog is to be continued.

62. (New) The method according to claim 59, wherein,

in the step of evaluating the consistency, the consistency of the interactive dialog is evaluated not only based on whether or not there is an occurrence of the user's misunderstanding of what the computer system previously says in a currently running interactive dialog, but also based on whether or not there is an occurrence of a computer system's error that includes an improper tracing of the string of words contained in the user's input and an improper analyzing of the syntactic pattern of the string of the words.

63. (New) The method according to claim 62, wherein,

in the step of evaluating the consistency, the consistency is evaluated taking into consideration at least one of a profile of the user, a probability distribution of used words in user's inputs, a user's tone of voice, and a probability distribution of response times of the user that is defined as a period from a time when outputting the phrase to the user so as to answer to a previous user's input to a further time when a user's input is received by the computer system.

64. (New) The method according to claim 59, wherein,

in the step of selecting words, one of a wrong word and a wrong phrase which breaks the consistency of the interactive dialog is intentionally selected.

65. (New) The method according to claim 59, wherein the step of evaluating the consistency further comprising steps of:

determining whether or not the computer system allows a user's mistake in choosing a word included in the user's input leading to a spelling error and a syntax error;

determining whether or not the computer system makes a concession to a user's requirement; and

determining whether or not the computer system asks the user about the user's input.

66. (New) The method according to claim 65, further comprising the steps of:

learning a new word and a new phrase which is not contained in the dictionary when the user's input is not recognized since either one of the words or the syntactic pattern of the string of the words contained in the user's input is not found in the dictionary by asking the user a question about the user's input and receiving a user's response until a recognition of the user's input is accomplished; and

updating the dictionary based on a user's response to the question about the user's input asked by the computer system.

67. (New) The method according to claim 65, further comprising a step of:

determining whether or not the interactive dialog with the user is to be continued even further based on a result of the evaluated consistency of the interactive dialog with the user, wherein even if the user's input includes the word or a phrase indicating the fact the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system, there is a case where the interactive dialog is to be continued.

68. (New) The method according to claim 65, wherein,

in the step of evaluating the consistency, the consistency of the interactive dialog is evaluated not only based on whether or not there is an occurrence of the user's misunderstanding

of what the computer system previously says in a currently running interactive dialog, but also based on whether or not there is an occurrence of a computer system's error that includes an improper tracing of the string of words contained in the user's input and an improper analyzing of the syntactic pattern of the string of the words.

69. (New) A method for handling a spoken interactive dialog with a user of a computer system, wherein the computer system has a dictionary stored in a data base, the dictionary containing a plurality of words and a plurality of phrases, each phrase containing a string of words and a syntactic pattern, comprising the steps of:

recognizing a user's spoken language which is received by a computer system as a user's input and understanding what the user says by tracing a string of words contained in the user's input and analyzing a syntactic pattern of the string of the words contained in the user's input by referring to the dictionary stored in the data base;

evaluating a consistency of the interactive dialog based on a result of whether or not the user misunderstands what the computer system previously says in a currently running interactive dialog;

selecting words from the data base so as to generate a phrase which is used to answer the user's input, even if the user's input includes a word or a phrase indicating a fact the user makes a mistake in inputting the user's input to the computer system; and

synthesizing the phrase as voice sound so as to answer the user about the user's input.

70. (New) A method for executing a word chain game which is played by a user and a computer system having a data base that stores a dictionary containing a plurality of words, the word chain game being defined as a word-interchanging game between the user and the computer system in which an iterative step will be repeated until a loser is determined based on a

judgment of whether the user or the computer system first breaks a rule of the word chain game, the rule saying that game players are alternately requested to output a word which has an initial alphabet letter identical to final alphabet letters of a previous word, has not been used since the start of the word chain game, and does not finish with a predetermined alphabet letter, comprising the steps of:

recognizing a user's input;

determining whether or not the user's input is allowed with respect to the rule of the word chain game so as to judge whether or not the word chain game played by the user and the computer system is to be continued;

selecting a word if it is determined that the word chain game is to be continued by the evaluation unit, wherein a wrong word that leads to a termination of the word chain game due to breaking the rule by the computer system is allowed as the selected word; and

outputting the selected word selected by the selection unit to the user as an answer.

71. (New) The method according to claim 70, further comprising the steps of:

learning a new word which is not contained in the dictionary when the user's input is not recognized since the user's input is not found in the dictionary by asking the user a question about the user's input and receiving a user's response until a recognition of the user's input is accomplished; and

updating the dictionary based on a user's response to the question about the user's input asked by the computer system.

72. (New) The method according to claim 71, wherein

the data base of the computer system further stores a plurality of a series of words which are chained in accordance with the rule of the word chain game, and

in the step of selecting the word, the word for answering the user is selected from those included in the plurality of the series of the words stored in the data base in order not to terminate the word chain game due to a difficulty for searching a next word.